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C O N F I D E N T I A L PANAMA 0191

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SUBJ: GOP KEEPS LID ON THE ELEVENTH COMMEMORATION OF JANUARY 9 RIOTS

SUMMARY. THE ELEVENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE JANUARY 9, 1964 RIOTS PASSED WITHOUT SERIOUS INCIDENTS ALTHOUGH A DISSIDENT STUDENT FACTION CAUSED GOP SOME EMBARRASSMENT BY EXPRESSING CRITICISM OF GOP AND ESPECIALLY OF KISSINGER-TACK 8 POINT AGREEMENT. SOME PUBLIC BUILDINGS, INCLUDING FOREIGN MINISTRY AND AID, WERE PAINTED WITH SLOGANS BY STUDENTS. ON JANUARY 9 THE MAIN CEREMONY TOOK PLACE AT PLAZA PORRAS (IN FRONT OF FOREIGN MINISTRY). IT WAS OPENED BY MASS LED BY ARCHBISHOP MCGRATH WHO PLEDGED THE CHURCH'S SUPPORT TO THE GOP'S NEGOTIATING EFFORTS. FOLLOWING THE MASS LABOR MINISTER ROLANDO MURGAS SPOKE AS THE GOP'S REPRESENTATIVE. (FOREIGN MINISTER TACK DID NOT SPEAK AS HAD BEEN ANNOUNCED.) CEREMONY AT PLAZA PORRAS WAS RELATIVELY SUBDUED. IT WAS FOLLOWED BY MARCH TO AMADOR GUERRERO AND GARDEN OF PEACE CEMETERIES WHERE OTHER SPEAKERS HELD FORTH, WITH RUAL CHANG, PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF CORREGIMIENTO REPRESENTATIVES DELIVERING A MODERATE AND BRIEF SPEECH. THE CROWD AT PLAZA PORRAS NUMBERED BETWEEN 2000-2500 AND WAS RELATIVELY SUBDUED. NO HOSTILITY WAS SHOWN TOWARD EMBOFF CIRCULATING IN CROWD.

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SPEECHES BY GOP SPEAKERS MURGAS AND CHANG WERE NOT PROVOCATIVE,

ALTHOUGH MURGAS, WHILE TRACING HISTORY OF CANAL ISSUE AND EVENTS OF 1964 CRITICIZED "COLONIAL SITUATION" IN CANAL ZONE AND U.S. IMPERIALISM. HE SAID 8 POINT AGREEMENT REPRESENTED PROGRESS OVER 1967 DRAFT TREATIES AND PROMISED THAT PANAMANIAN PEOPLE WOULD HAVE FINAL WORD CONCERNING ACCEPTABILITY OF A NEW TREATY. (SEE FBIS 091914 JAN. 75 FOR TEXT OF MURGAS SPEECH.) END SUMMARY.

1. GOP PLANNING CALLED FOR A SERIOUS, SUBDUED COMMEMORATION OF THE JANUARY 9, 1964 RIOTS. CEREMONIES IN PANAMA CITY WOULD OCCUR AT THESE SITES: PLAZA PORRAS NEAR THE FOREIGN MINISTRY, AND AT THE AMADOR GUERRERO AND GARDEN OF PEACE CEMETERIES WHERE THE MARTYRS OF 1964 ARE BURIED. THE PRINCIPAL PANAMANIAN STUDENT ORGANIZATION, THE PANAMANIAN FEDERATION OF STUDENTS (FEP), HAD INDICATED IT WOULD COOPERATE WITH THE GOP IN CONDUCTING ORDERLY VIOLENCE-FREE CEREMONIES, BUT TWO DAYS BEFORE THE CEREMONIES, THE NATIONAL GUARD (GN) G-2 BECAME AWARE THAT A SPLINTER GROUP, THE REVOLUTIONARY STUDENT FRONT (FER) COMPOSED MAINLY OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS FROM THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE, HAD PLANS TO DISRUPT THE CEREMONIES AND PAINT SLOGANS ON THE AMERICAN AND CUBAN EMBASSIES. ACCORDINGLY, THE GN PROVIDED HEAVY PROTECTION FOR THE U.S. EMBASSY. ALSO MINISTER OF EDUCATION ROYO MET WITH STUDENTS AT THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE ON JANUARY 8 TO PERSUADE THEM NOT TO DISRUPT THE CELEBRATION. WHILE PARTIALLY SUCCESSFUL IN ITS EFFORTS TO PREVENT A RUCKUS, THE GOP DID NOT ENTIRELY SUCCEED. ABOUT 100 STUDENTS BEARING NATIONAL INSTITUTE AND FER BANNERS ARRIVED AT PLAZA PORRAS WHEN GOP SPEAKER WAS MIDWAY THROUGH HIS SPEECH AND WITH THEIR CHANTS FROM THE BACK OF THE CROWD IMPEDED SOME PERSONS FROM HEARING THE REMAINDER OF THE SPEECH. HOWEVER, NO VIOLENCE OR OTHER DISRUPTION OCCURRED.

2. THE CEREMONY AT PLAZA PORRAS WAS OPENED BY MASS LED BY ARCHBISHOP MCGRATH WHO IDENTIFIED THE CHURCH FULLY WITH PANAMANIAN NATIONAL ASPIRATIONS AND CALLED FOR REASON, JUSTICE AND TOLERANCE TO PREVAIL IN THE RELATIONS BETWEEN NATIONS AS WELL AS BETWEEN INDIVIDUALS. HE CLOSED HIS REMARKS WITH A MOVING AND SUCCESSFUL PLEA FOR EACH PERSON IN THE AUDIENCE TO SHAKE HANDS WITH HIS NEIGHBOR AND WISH HIM PEACE. EMBASSY OFFICER WHO WAS CIRCULATING IN THE CROWD WAS GREETED IN A WARM AND SINCERE MANNER BY ALL AROUND HIM AT THIS POINT IN THE CEREMONY.

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AT NO TIME WAS HOSTILITY TOWARD HIM EVIDENCED.

3. FOREIGN MINISTER TACK, ACCORDING TO ANNOUNCEMENTS IN THE NEWSPAPERS A WEEK BEFORE JANUARY 9, WAS TO HAVE BEEN THE KEYNOTE SPEAKER, BUT LABOR MINISTER ROLANDO MURGAS APPEARED IN HIS PLACE. MURGAS DEVELOPED THE THEME THAT JANUARY 9, 1964 HAD BEEN A TURNING POINT IN PANAMANIAN HISTORY AND HAD BEEN THE STIMULANT WHICH HAD AWAKENED THE NATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS OF

PANAMANIANIANS. HE CRITICIZED THE "COLONIAL" SITUATION IN THE CANAL ZONE AND U.S. IMPERIALISM, BUT OTHERWISE WAS NOT PROVOCATIVE IN HIS REFERENCES TO THE U.S. FOLLOWING MURGAS' SPEECH THE BAND PLAYED AND THERE WAS A READING OF PATRIOTIC POETRY; THEN THE MARCH TO THE CEMETERIES BEGAN. THE MARCH ROUTE WAS WELL PATROLLED BY GN PERSONNEL AND NO INCIDENTS OCCURRED.

4. AT THE AMADOR GUERRERO CEMETERY THE KEY SPEAKER WAS THE PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF CORREGIMIENTO REPRESENTATIVES, RAUL CHANG, WHO GAVE A SHORT MODERATE ADDRESS. HE WAS FOLLOWED BY THE NEWLY ELECTED PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL STUDENT FEDERATION OF PANAMA, ROBERTO GOMEZ, WHO GAVE A HARANGUE EXTOLLING GENERAL OMAR TORRIJOS AND THE CUBAN REVOLUTION. HE ACCUSED THE U.S. OF PRACTICING ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL COLONIALISM, DESCRIBED THE U.S., "INVASIONS" OF CUBA AND THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC, AS WELL AS THE "ATROCITIES" OF JANUARY 9, 1964 AS BEING ACTIONS OF U.S. IMPERIALISM. NEVERTHELESS, BY PANAMANIAN STUDENT STANDARDS GOMEZ' SPEECH WAS RELATIVELY MODERATE AND NOT INFLAMMATORY. THE ANTI-GOVERNMENT FER STUDENTS BOOED THE REFERENCES TO TORRIJOS AND OCCASIONALLY MADE SUCH A RACKET THAT THE RADIO BROADCASTS OF THE SPEECH WERE INTERRUPTED FOR A FEW MINUTES WITH CLASSICAL MUSIC BEING SUBSTITUTED. OF THEIR CHANTS THE TWO MOST OFTEN REPEATED WERE "THE PEOPLE ARE HUNGRY" AND "THE EIGHT POINTS ARE MIERDA." LABOR AND CAMPESINO REPRESENTATIVES SPOKE AT THE GARDEN OF PEACE CEMETARY. ALL ACTIVITIES WERE TERMINATED BY NOON.

5. DURING THE NIGHT OF JANUARY 8 THE FER STUDENTS WERE ACTIVE WITH PAINT SPRAY CANS AT VARIOUS PUBLIC BUILDINGS IN THE CITY, INCLUDING THE FOREIGN MINISTRY AND THE BUILDING IN WHICH AID IS LOCATED. SLOGANS PAINTED ON THE FOREIGN MINISTRY WERE "OUT WITH THE MILITARY BASES" AND "NO TREATY INCLUDING MILITARY BASES." ON THE AID BUILDING WAS PAINTED "OUT WITH MILITARY

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BASES" AND "OUT WITH THE CIA AND AID."

6. COMMENT. TELEVISION AND RADIO NEWS REPORTING OF THE JANUARY 9 EVENTS WAS RELATIVELY SUBDUED. CLEARLY THE GOP WAS DETERMINED TO PREVENT ATTACKS ON THE U.S. EMBASSY AND/OR INCURSIONS INTO THE CANAL ZONE. THE OPPOSITION FER STUDENTS EXPRESSED WAS DIRECTED BOTH AGAINST THE TORRIJOS REGIME AND AGAINST THE KIND OF COMPROMISE THAT PEOPLE HERE ARE BEGINNING TO SENSE THAT THE GOP IS MAKING IN THE CANAL TREATY NEGOTIATIONS. AS THE NATURE OF THE COMPROMISE BECOMES CLEAR, THE GOP CAN EXPECT INCREASINGLY NOISY OPPOSITION FROM THE FER. THE GOP IS HOPING, HOWEVER, TO KEEP THE SUPPORT OF THE FEP, WHICH IS THE MAINSTREAM OF THE STUDENT MOVEMENT.

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